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Message Text

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15
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 11667

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT JA
SUBJECT: KOMEITO ELEVENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: KOMEITO HELD ELEVENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION AT KUDAN HALL TOKYO SEPTEMBER 4 THRU 6. DELEGATES UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED NEW POLICY PROGRAM PROPOSED BY CENTRAL COMMITTEE, ELECTED SIXTY-ONE MEMBER SLATE TO NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE, AND IN LAST ACT BEFORE ADJOURNMENT UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED RESOLUTION CALLING FOR BEST EFFORT TO WIN VICTORY IN 1974 UPPER HOUSE ELECTION AND TO OVERTHROW LDP GOVERNMENT LED BY PRIMIN TANAKA. NEW FOREIGN POLICY PROGRAM APPROVED BY CONVENTION CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ABROGATION OF US-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY AND ITS REPLACEMENT BY NEW TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND NON-AGGRESSION. NEW DOMESTIC PROGRAM CALLS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF MIDDLE-OF-ROAD REFORMIST COALITION GOVERNMENT TO BE FORMED WITH OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES. END SUMMARY.

1. KOMEITO HELD ELEVENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION AT KUDAN HALL LAST WEEK AS IT APPROACHED TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNDATION IN NOVEMBER 1964. MAJOR BUSINESS OF CONVENTION WAS PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF NEW POLICY PROGRAM
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PROPOSED BY CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WHICH DESIGNED TO INCREASE OPPOSITION PARTY COLORATION OF KOMEITO. CHAIRMAN YOSHIKATSU TAKEIRI, IN POST-CONVENTION PRESS CONFERENCE, PROUDLY DESCRIBED NEW PROGRAM AS FIRST CLEAR EXPRESSION BY

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ANY OPPOSITION PARTY OF ITS CONCEPT OF POST-LDP
COALITION GOVERNMENT AND STRESSED ITS QTE MIDDLE-OF-ROAD
UNQTE NATURE.

2. PARTY SLATE OF SIXTY-ONE NOMINEES TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE
ELECTED UNANIMOUSLY WITH NO MAJOR PERSONNEL CHANGES.

3. CHAIRMAN TAKEIRI, IN CALLING FOR STRENUOUS PARTY
EFFORT TO WIN 1974 UPPER HOUSE ELECTION, INTRODUCED SLATE
OF EIGHTEEN CANDIDATES ENDORSED BY KOMEITO, NINE EACH IN
NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONSTITUENCIES. ENDORSEMENTS
GIVEN EIGHT UPPER HOUSE INCUMBENTS, WITH ONE NEW
CANDIDATE RUNNING FOR SEAT NOW HELD BY MINORU SAWADA WHO
RETIRING. ENDORSEMENTS GIVEN THREE LOWER HOUSE INCUMBENTS,
AND TO SIX NEW CANDIDATES, ONE OF WHOM RUNNING FOR SEAT NOW
HELD BY INCUMBENT TORU ASAI (HYOGO) WHO ALSO RETIRING.
KOMEITO ENDORSED CANDIDATES FOR FIRST TIME IN LOCAL
CONSTITUENCIES OF HOKKAIDO, KANAGAWA, CHIBA, OKAYAMA, AND
FUKUOKA WHERE PARTY HAS NEVER HELD UPPER HOUSE SEATS.

4. FINAL ACT OF CONVENTION WAS UNANIMOUSE ADOPTION OF
RESOLUTION OPPOSING LDP AND BIG BUSINESS, WHICH CALLED ON
PARTY MEMBERS TO MAKE BEST EFFORT TO ACHIEVE VICTORY IN
1974 UPPER HOUSE ELECTION AND TO WORK FOR OVERTHROW OF
TANAKA GOVERNMENT.

5. TONE OF DOMESTIC POLICY PROGRAM IS ANTI-LDP AND ANTI-
BIG BUSINESS, IN KEEPING WITH KOMEITO MOVE TO LEFT IN EFFORT
TO RECOVER FROM LOSSES SUFFERED IN DECEMBER 1972 GENERAL
ELECTION. KOMEITO PATENTLY CONTINUES TO APPEAL TO POPULIST
SENTIMENTS IN SUCH PROBLEM AREAS OF DEEP CONCERN AS INFLATION,
POLLUTION, WELFARE AND EDUCATION.

6. IT APPARENT THAT MANY DELEGATES DISTURBED, HOWEVER, BY
CALL FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF QTE MIDDLE-OF-ROAD UNQTE
COALITION GOVERNMENT ON BASIS OF COOPERATION WITH OTHER
OPPOSITION PARTIES, SINCE THIS LEAVES DOOR OPEN TO KOMEITO
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COOPERATION WITH JCP. WHEN DELEGATES OPENLY QUESTIONED WISDOM
OF POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIP IN COALITION WITH JCP, SECRETARY
GENERAL JUNYA YANO EXPLAINED THAT KOMEITO WOULD CONTINUE TALKS
WITH JCP AIMED AT BROADENING AREAS OF POSSIBLE
COOPERATION. MEANTIME, YANO SAID, PARTY HOPES THAT JCP WOULD
MODERATE ITS IDEOLOGY WHEN TIME COMES TO DISCUSS SPECIFICS
OF FORMING COALITION GOVERNMENT. AT SAME TIME YANO
KEPT JCP AT ARMS LENGTH BY DECLINING TO EXCLUDE DSP FROM
POSSIBLE MIDDLE-OF-ROAD REFORMIST COALITION GOVERNMENT.
JCP, IT SHOULD BE NOTED, CONTINUES TO DENIGRATE DSP AS
QTE QUASI-CONSERVATIVE PARTY UNQTE.

7. IN POST-ELECTION PRESS CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN TAKEIRI,

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QUESTIONED SHARPLY ON THIS POINT, EXPLAINED THAT SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS MARKED BY FACT THAT KOMEITO HAS BEGUN TO COOPERATE WITH JCP IN NUMBER OF SPECIFIC POLICY AREAS SINCE LAST CONVENTION. HOWEVER, IN NEXT BREATH TAKEIRI DESCRIBED STRONG DOUBTS WITHIN KOMEITO ABOUT QTE SELF-RIGHTEOUS UNQTE NATURE OF JCP AS POSSIBLE COALITION PARTNER. TAKEIRI CALLED FOR STRONG EFFORT WITHIN KOMEITO TO DISPEL SUCH DOUBTS, BUT ADDED THAT HE COULD NOT, AT THIS STAGE, DETERMINE WITH ANY DEGREE OF CONFIDENCE WHETHER IT BEST FOR KOMEITO TO JOIN WITH JCP IN FORMING COALITION, SINCE JCP HAS NOT YET MADE PUBLIC ITS CONCEPT OF NATURE OF COALITION WHICH MIGHT BE FORMED, AND IS NOT EXPECTED TO DO SO UNTIL ITS CONVENTION MEETS IN NOVEMBER.

8. FOREIGN POLICY PROGRAM RATIFIED BY CONVENTION FORMALIZED KOMEITO POSITION CALLING FOR QTE IMMEDIATE ABROGATION OF US-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY UNQTE TO REFLECT CURRENT TREND TOWARD REDUCTION OF TENSIONS IN WORLD, AND FOR ITS REPLACEMENT BY TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND NON-AGGRESSION WITH UNITED STATES. YOSHIAKI MASAKI, CHAIRMAN OF POLICY COMMITTEE, EXPLAINED TO CONVENTION THAT PREREQUISITE FOR ABROGATION WOULD BE ADOPTION OF POLICY OF POLITICAL NEUTRALITY BY JAPAN. MASAKI ALSO EXPLAINED THAT ABROGATION OF SECURITY TREATY SHOULD BE NEGOTIATED WITH UNITED STATES. KOMEITO DOES NOT LOOK TOWARD UNARMED NEUTRALITY FOR JAPAN, HOWEVER, AS SEEN IN MASAKI EXPLANATION THAT JAPAN MUST MAINTAIN MINIMUM LEVEL OF PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO ENSURE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, FULFILL OBLIGATIONS AS NEUTRAL AND MAINTAIN LAW

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AND ORDER.

9. EMBASSY POUCHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONVENTION DOCUMENTS PROVIDED BY KOMEITO.

10. COMMENT: MAJOR KOMEITO POLICY SHIFTS RATIFIED BY CONVENTION (IMMEDIATE ABROGATION OF SECURITY TREATY AND CONCEPT OF MIDDLE-OF-ROAD COALITION GOVERNMENT) APPEAR TO BE CONSISTENT WITH EXPLICIT PARTY DESIRE TO EXPAND POLITICAL SUPPORT BASE BEYOND LIMITS OF SOKA GAKKAI MEMBERSHIP, HOPEFULLY BY PROJECTING STRONGER OPPOSITION IMAGE. HOWEVER, IN ATTEMPTING TO KEEP ALL OPTIONS OPEN, KOMEITO APPEARS TO HAVE EXPOSED ITSELF TO POSSIBLE CRITICISM FOR PATENT OPPORTUNISM AND LACK OF CONSIDERATION OF LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF ITS NEW POSITIONS. MANY INITIATIVES SEEM TO HAVE BUILT-IN COUNTERVAILING OR INHIBITORY ELEMENTS, E.G. SUGGESTING POSSIBLE COALITION WITH JCP WITHOUT RULING OUT POSSIBILITY OF INCLUDING DSP--A PROPOSITION JCP BOUND TO REJECT. EVEN CALL FOR IMMEDIATE ABROGATION OF SECURITY TREATY IS HEDGED WITH SUCH AMBIGUITY THAT INFERENCE MAY BE DRAWN THAT PRIMARY INTEREST OF KOMEITO MAY WELL BE TO CLAIM CREDIT FOR FURTHER U.S. BASE CONSOLIDATIONS AND REDUCTIONS NOW BEING

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CALLED FOR IN CONGRESS TO REFLECT END OF VIETNAM WAR AND
NEED FOR BUDGET STRINGENCIES, RATHER THAN TO SERVE JAPAN'S
LONG-TERM SECURITY NEEDS. ONLY 1974 ELECTION CAN
DEMONSTRATE WHETHER KOMEITO APPEAL HAS STRUCK RESPONSIVE
POPULAR CHORD. END COMMENT.
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